

Message Text

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ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 NASA-04 USIE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 CPR-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 NSF-04 NAS-01

SAJ-01 MBFR-03 ACDA-19 MC-02 RSR-01 /122 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 828

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 9124

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TSPA, TECH, PFOR, UR

SUBJ: APOLLO 17 LUNA SAMPLE PRESENTATION

REF: A. STATE 113609; B. STATE 129075; C. MOSCOW 7809

1. (U) UPON ONLY SIX HOURS ADVANCE NOTICE FROM MFA OF THE ARRANGEMENTS, I PRESENTED THE LUNAR SAMPLE TODAY, AUG. ONE, 16:00 HOURS, TO CHAIRMAN OF PRESIDUM OF SUPREME SOVIET N.V. PODGORNYY ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT NIXON AND AMERICAN PEOPLE AS GIFT TO SOVIET PEOPLE. CEREMONY, WHICH WAS HELD IN BUILDING OF PRESIDUM OF SUPREME SOVIET IN KREMLIN, HAD OBVIOUSLY BEEN WELL-ORCHESTRATED AND STAGED AS IMPORTANT EVENT BY PODGORNYY. ABOUT THIRTY SOVIET PRESS AND TELEVISION REPRESENTATIVES, AS WELL AS AP AND UPI CORRESPONDENTS, COVERED THE PRESENTATION ITSELF. AFTER I HAD DELIVERED STATEMENT ALONG LINES CONVEYED IN REF. B. AND PODGORNYY RESPONDED, PRESS REPRESENTATIVES DEPARTED TO ALLOW PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH PODGORNYY AND HIS PARTY.

2. (U) HIGH LEVEL COMPOSITION AND SIZE OF SOVIET SIDE ATTENDING CEREMONY IS INDICATOR OF IMPORTANCE SOVIETS ATTACHED TO IT. SOVIET SIDE INCLUDED M. P. GEORGADZE, SECRETARY, PRESIDUM OF USSR SUPREME SOVIET; V. V. KUZNETSOV, FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER
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OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MFA; M. V. KELDYSH, PRESIDENT OF USSR

ACADEMY OF SCIENCES; M. P. KOVALEV, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, STATE COMMITTEE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY; GENERAL A G. NIKOLAYEV, COSMONAUT; V. V. MIKHAILOV, DEPUTY CHIEF, USA DIVISION MFA; AND V. G. VYSOTIN, CHIEF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT, USSR SUPREME SOVIET.

3. IN REPLY TO MY OPENING STATEMENT, PODGORNYY SAID THAT HE ACCEPTED THE GIFT WITH "GREAT SATISFACTION AND GRATITUDE." HE SAID THAT THE INVESTIGATION OF SPACE, ESPECIALLY THE MOON, WAS OF "EXTRAORDINARY SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE" AND CONGRATULATED THE "BRAVE" CREW OF APOLLO 17 WHO BROUGHT THIS SAMPLE BACK TO EARTH. WE ALL KNOW RISKS INVOLVED, HE ADDED. HE THEN RECITED VARIOUS AREAS OF SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION THAT HAVE RESULTED FROM AGREEMENTS SIGNED DURING RECENT MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON SUMMIT MEETINGS AND PRAISED THE SUCCESS OF BILATERAL ACTIVITIES UNDER THOSE OF THE AGREEMENTS WHO IMPLEMENTATIONS HAVE ALREADY BEEN INITIATED. HE SAID SUCH COOPERATION SHOULD BE EXAMPLE FOR ALL TO FOLLOW AND THAT COOPERATION IN SPACE WAS GOOD EXAMPLE FOR COOPERATION ON EARTH. GOAL OF SUCH COOPERATION IS TO ACHIEVE STABLE, LONG (DLITEL'NIY), AND CONTINUING (PRODOLZHITEL'NIY) PEACE ON EARTH SO THAT ALL COUNTRIES CAN DEVELOP ACCORDING TO OWN DESIRES. HE OFFERED TOAST TO PEACE ON EARTH, PEACE IN SPACE, AND REQUESTED THAT HIS BEST WISHES AND THANKS BE CONVEYED TO PRESIDENT NIXON, TO ALL US ASTRONAUTS, AND TO ALL AMERICAN PEOPLE. HE ALSO ASKED THAT HIS BEST REGARDS BE GIVEN TO SECOND CREW OF SKYLAB AND WISHED THEM SUCCESS IN THEIR CURRENT MISSION.

4. (CONF) DURING HIGHLY GENERALIZED DISCUSSION OF US-USSR BILATERAL COOPERATION PODGORNYY REFERRED TO SOME QUARTERS THAT DO NOT UNDERSTAND SPIRIT OF OUR SUMMIT MEETINGS AND THE BILATERAL AGREEMENTS LEADING TO INCREASED COOPERATION AND THAT BELIEVE US AND USSR ARE ATTEMPTING TO DIVIDE WORLD AND CREATE SPHERES OF INFLUENCE. HOWEVER, SOVIETS ARE CONVINCED THAT DEVELOPMENTS WILL DISPEL THESE DOUBTS, HE SAID. HE UNDERLINED USEFULNESS OF SUMMIT MEETINGS AND SAID SOVIET SIDE LOOKING FORWARD TO RETURN VISIT OF PRESIDENT.

5. (U) PODGORNYY SAID THAT LUNAR SAMPLE WOULD BE ENTRUSTED TO ACADEMY OF SCIENCES FOR SAFE KEEPING AND WOULD BE PUT ON PER-CONFIDENTIAL

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MANENT DISPLAY AT ITS A.E. FERSMAN MINERALOGICAL MUSEUM ON GROUNDS OF ACADEMY PRESIDUM IN MOSCOW, WHERE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PEOPLE WILL HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO VIEW IT. DIRECTOR OF MUSEUM IS G. P. BARTSANOV.

6. (U) MEETING LASTED 45 MINUTES AND PODGORNYY RADIATED EXTREME APPRECIATION FOR GIFT THROUGHOUT. DETAILS OF CONVERSATION FOLG

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